



USSR-INDIA:

Soviets Trumpet Gorbachev Visit

Moscow launched an all-out public relations campaign for General Secretary Gorbachev's visit to New Delhi last week by using its extensive connections in the Indian press—tolerated by the Indian Government—to generate highly favorable media coverage. [REDACTED]

Moscow sent a public relations specialist to New Delhi in September to coordinate propaganda activities for the visit. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the Soviets paid \$200,000 to eight major New Delhi newspapers for advertising supplements highlighting the visit and also paid and entertained at least a dozen journalists. One Soviet official toured four northern Indian states and urged editors to print articles on Indo-Soviet cooperation. [REDACTED]

During the visit, [REDACTED] the Soviets virtually took over the Indian national television network. They wrote programs, vetted Indian scripts, and chose film footage to be transmitted on all news and special programming for the four-day visit. The Soviets also helped the Indian Press Information Bureau select journalists to attend Gorbachev's press conferences and used Indian employees of the Soviet Embassy to persuade these journalists not to ask embarrassing questions. [REDACTED]

Comment: Prime Minister Gandhi appears to have given Moscow a free propaganda hand. Gorbachev's well-received speech to a joint session of the Indian parliament, the joint communique on principles for a nuclear-weapons-free world, and Gandhi's glowing endorsement of Gorbachev as a "crusader for peace" put India firmly on the public record in support of Soviet foreign policy positions on arms control, SDI, and the UN. The Soviets will use the extensive publicity surrounding the visit as part of their propaganda on arms control and other foreign policy issues, especially in the Third World. [REDACTED]

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